

**City of Reading City Council
Regular Business Meeting
Monday, October 24, 2011**

Vaughn D. Spencer, President of Council, called the meeting to order.

The invocation was given by Pastor Eileen Levan of Nativity Lutheran Church.

All present pledged to the flag.

ATTENDANCE

Council President Spencer
Councilor Acosta, District 1
Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, District 2
Councilor Sterner, District 3
Councilor Marmarou, District 4
Councilor Reed, District 5
Councilor Waltman, District 6
City Auditor D. Cituk
City Solicitor C. Younger
City Clerk L. Kelleher
Managing Director C. Geffken

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

The City Council issued the following:

- City Clerk Kelleher issued the appointment oath to Kevin Kulp promoted to Fire Chief
- City Clerk Kelleher issued the appointment oath to the following firefighters promoted to Deputy Chief:
 - Thomas Kemery
 - Frank Nefos, Jr.
 - Gary Mogel
 - Nicholas Amicone
- City Clerk L. Kelleher issued the appointment oath to the following firefighters promoted to Lieutenant
 - James Stoudt, Jr.
 - R. Wentzel, Jr

- Sean Hart
- Scot Landis
- Steven Serba
- City Clerk Kelleher issued the appointment oath to Brian Smith appointed as Administrative Officer
- The Pagoda Pennies, on behalf of the City of Reading and the Reading Pagoda Foundation, accepted a contribution from the Blue Mountain Region Sports Car Club of America. This contribution will be utilized towards the restoration of the flagpole at the Reading Pagoda.
- Reading City Council presented a commendation to the Blue Mountain Region Sports Club of America for its 60 year sponsorship of the annual Pagoda Hill and Duryea Hill Climbs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Council President Spencer announced that four (4) citizens registered to address Council on agenda matters and one (1) citizen registered on non-agenda matters. He inquired if any member of Council objected to suspending the public speaking rule requiring non-agenda comment at the end of the meeting. As no one objected, the rule was suspended. He reminded the citizens about the remaining public speaking rules.

Chuck Holder, representing Entrepreneurs Connected, spoke about the proposed Community Garden project at Second and Franklin Street. He described the organizations past projects and their maintenance of those projects. He described the groups focus on the City's gateways and other prominent areas.

Lynn Christy, of Penn Street, spoke in opposition of the proposed Rental Permit fee. He stated that although landlords will realize a savings on the annual Rental Permit fee, those savings will be negated by the increase in the inspection fee. He expressed the belief that the current housing permit fee should stay in place. He noted the difficulties landlords will have absorbing the higher inspection fee cost. He also expressed the belief that those investors who made the request for this change are not considering the entire problem.

Ernie Schlegel, of Pear Street, explained how the City's organizational chart affects the Library Board and the Director of the Library. He stated that the Library Director reports to the Library Board and the Library Director is on equal footing with the Managing Director. He stated that in the Library's bylaws show that the Director is appointed by the Board and the salary is also set by the Board. He also asked Council to reconsider providing funding for the Reading Public Library in the 2012 budget. He then described the fundraising activities of

the current Library Board who allocated an additional \$490K to Library operations.

Chuck Liedike, Government Affairs Director for the Reading-Berks Association of Realtors, stated that City Council had the opportunity to approve the CORE program ordinance at this meeting. He stated that the CORE program will remarket government owned properties to become owner-occupied properties. He described the devaluation of properties located within 150 ft from vacant buildings. He stated that vacant properties cause problems for neighborhoods. He thanked the City for their partnership to begin this program.

MaryAnn Ciarlone, of North 5th Street, stated that she filed a Right-to-Know application for the draft Rental Permit legislation.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA & MINUTES

Council President Spencer called Council's attention to the agenda for this meeting and to the minutes from Special Meeting of October 3rd and the Regular Council Meeting from October 10th. He noted the need to remove the Award of Contract for Solid Waste services from the Consent Agenda heading.

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz, to approve the minutes from the October 3rd Special Meeting and the October 10th Regular Meeting of Council and the agenda including the legislation listed under the Consent Agenda heading, as amended. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda Legislation

Award of Contract – to American Rock Salt Co., LLC, P. O. Box 190, Mt. Morris, NY, 14510, at a bid price of \$59.32 per ton for delivered salt and \$57.00 for picked-up salt for the Department of Public Works. American Rock Salt Co. is the low bidder to meet the specifications **(Purchasing)**

Award of Contract - for Gasoline for the Department of Public Works and the RAWA to Isobunkers, LLC, 2 New Road, Suite 311, Aston, PA 19104, at the unit prices submitted **(Purchasing)**

Resolution 182-2011 promoting Police Officer Donald Sheidy to the rank of Sergeant in the Reading Police Department, effective Tuesday, November 1, 2011 **(Police)**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Managing Director Geffken read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- Update on the 2012 Budget Review Meetings
- Upgrade of City Hall email system to a Google System
- Update meeting for the Waste Water Treatment Project on October 31st following the General Fund public hearing
- Update on the Muncibid auction of four (4) vehicles which ends on Friday, October 28th.

AUDITOR'S REPORT

City Auditor Cituk read the report distributed to Council at the meeting covering the following:

- 2011 Admissions Tax collection
- 2011 Real Estate Transfer Tax collection

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Bill No. 50-2011 - authorizing the Mayor to execute the Memorandum of Understanding between the Reading Berks Association of Realtors and the City of Reading for the creation of the CORE Program within Reading (**Law/Council Staff**) *Introduced at the September 12 regular meeting; MOU finalized*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 50-2011.

Council President Spencer announced that this program was proposed by the Reading-Berks Association of Realtors who worked with City staff to develop the Memorandum of Understanding attached and the guidelines for the program.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed her belief in the partnership with the Reading-Berks Association of Realtors and thanked them for bringing this proposal forward. She expressed the belief that this is a good start in the right direction.

Councilor Reed noted her cynicism of the economic development partnerships in the area but congratulated the Reading-Berks Association of Realtors for turning words into actions.

Council President Spencer announced that the Reading Redevelopment Authority and the Blighted Property Review Committee support the implementation of the CORE program.

Managing Director Geffken stated that the Administration will be providing the start up seed money for the CORE program.

Bill No. 50-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,

President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Bill No. 53-2011 - amend the zoning ordinance by changing the duties of the zoning administrator relating to the properties located in the zoning backlog and adding Conditional Use Procedures *Introduced at the Sept 26 regular meeting; Advertised Oct 3 and Oct 10th; Public Hearing October 18 at 5 pm; Eligible for enactment at the October 24th regular meeting*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 53-2011.

Bill No. 53-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,

President – 7

Nays: None- 0

Bill No. 56-2011 - amending Chapter 5, Code Enforcement of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Reading by adding Alleys and Recycling Storage to existing Quality of Life Violations (Law) *Introduced at the Sept 26 regular meeting; tabled at the October 10 regular meeting*

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to tabled Bill No. 56-2011.

Bill No. 56-2011 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,

President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Bill No. 57-2011 - amending the City of Reading Fee Schedule by reducing the annual rental permit fee (Bus Anal) *Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 57-2011.

Council President Spencer explained that this ordinance will require each rental property rather than each rental unit to pay an annual rental permit fee. He noted that Council will be increasing inspection fees at some point before the end of the year.

Councilor Waltman noted his support for the proposed ordinance but expressed disappointment after learning that the 2011 housing permit bills have not yet been generated. He stated that the goal was to have the housing permit bills generated by June or July.

Managing Director Geffken stated that the inspection will be based on number of units. He also noted that this change in the fee will apply for 2011 rental permit bills.

Bill No. 57-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7
Nays: None- 0**

Bill No. 58-2011 - amending the 2011 City of Reading Full Time Position Ordinance by reducing the number of Sergeant positions in the Reading Police Department from 26 to 23 (Man Dir) *Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting*

Councilor Marmarou moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to enact Bill No. 58-2011.

Managing Director Geffken stated that reduction reflects the Police Departments reorganization.

Bill No. 58-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7
Nays: None- 0**

Bill No. 59-2011 - authorizing the Mayor to execute a lease agreement between the City of Reading and ATV Bakery, Inc., which will allow the City to lease 203 Franklin Street, 205 Franklin Street, and 207 Franklin Street, and a lease agreement with the Reading Redevelopment Authority to allow the City to lease 201 Franklin Street, which together will be converted into a community garden by Entrepreneur's Connection (Law) *Introduced at the October 10 regular meeting*

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to enact Bill No. 59-2011.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz expressed her belief in this partnership that will improve and beautify the City's gateways. She also noted her appreciation of the sustainability component that this project brings.

Councilor Reed expressed her belief in the mission of the project and the organization.

Bill No. 59-2011 was enacted by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,

President – 7

Nays: None- 0

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ORDINANCES

There were no ordinances introduced at this meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 175–2011 - amending the CDBG Action plan as follows:

- Allocate \$100,000.00 of unprogrammed HOME funds to Habitat for Humanity for renovation of agency-owned properties throughout the City. Total project budget \$200,000.
- Cancel 2010 Blighted Property Review Committee Acquisition and Rehabilitation funding of \$78,000 and cancel the 2010 Neighborhood Home Ownership project funding of \$100,000 and reallocate \$178,000 to fund Habitat for Humanity for blighted property remediation through acquisition and renovations of properties, new construction, and/or repairs to owner-occupied properties in the target neighborhoods. With Habitat's proposed contribution, the total project budget will be \$600,000. ***Tabled at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to table Resolution No. 175-2011.

Resolution No. 175-2011 was tabled by the following vote:

Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,

President – 7

Nays: None – 0

Resolution 176–2011 - amending the CDBG Acton plan as follows:

- Provide \$23,859 in 2011 CHDO operating funds and \$47,178 in 2012 CHDO operating funds to increase rehabilitation capacity.
- Provide HOME Admin funds as necessary for NHS to administer and coordinate acquisition, rehabilitation and home ownership programs for affordable housing in the target neighborhood(s).
- Provide additional HOME Entitlement or CHDO Reserve funds for projects identified as appropriate. ***Tabled at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to table Resolution No. 176-2011.

Resolution No. 176-2011 was tabled by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7**

Nays: None – 0

Resolution 177–2011 – amending the CDBG Action Plan as follows:

- Provide \$400,000 in unprogrammed HOME funds to Berks Housing Development Partnership to develop, manage and administer affordable housing programs ***Tabled at the October 10 regular meeting***

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to table Resolution No. 177-2011.

Resolution No. 177-2011 was tabled by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7**

Nays: None – 0

Resolution 183–2011 - adopting the Final Report of the Recreation Commission Study

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz moved, seconded by Councilor Acosta, to adopt Resolution No. 183-2011.

Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the new formed Recreation Commission has started to meet and has begun to attack their groundwork. She stated that the minutes will be copied to the member of Council.

Resolution No. 183-2011 was adopted by the following vote:

**Yeas: Acosta, Goodman-Hinnershitz, Marmarou, Reed, Sterner, Waltman, Spencer,
President – 7**

Nays: None – 0

COUNCIL COMMENT

Council President Spencer reviewed the upcoming Council meeting schedule.

Councilor Acosta moved, seconded by Councilor Reed, to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk